

Legal Services National Technology Assistance Project

Management Softw

Helping nonprofit legal aid programs improve client services through innovative use of technology.

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Management Software and Analytics - Intro to Social Media

3. Management Software / Analytics

Management Software/Analytics

When should I start collecting data

You should start right away. It's isn't terribly difficult to set up something basic that is completely free, if you do that up front and you can track your popularity as it rises.

Collecting Data

There are three main tools for collecting data, Google Analytics, management software, and click trackers. Google Analytics is a tool that tracks and reports website traffic. Media managers like Hootsuite and Sproutsocial. Finally each of the social media platforms have some built in analytics, there is no reason not to use them too.

Management Software

If you are using a few different social media accounts it can be very convenient to have a tool to help manage them all from one central location. There is management software to do exactly that, once setup it allows you to see activity from each of your accounts and make posts, send messages, and collect data.

There are many options out there you can use, when you are first getting started I recommend Hootsuite. Hootsuite has a free version that should suffice for simple needs with the option to upgrade later, in addition they offer a good discount to nonprofits. If you want something cleaner and slightly easier check out Sproutsocial, it's more expensive but it has a much nicer interface and you can get more nice looking data out. Though not advertised Sprout Social offers nonprofits the Premium package at the Deluxe price.

Mouse Trackers

Mouse trackers will record where your users move the cursor and click and generate heat maps that help you see how your website is being used. It has been shown that the results from mouse tracking are quite close to eye tracking, and available for a fraction of the cost. Some mouse trackers like Hotjar even record user sessions and allow you to watch them individually so you can see exactly what steps people are going through. They are simple to install

Hotjar heat map

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Twitter Analytics

Twitter Analytics of LSNTAP's account\

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As you can see this provides a quick overview of your account on a month by month basis, the current month on top and the previous ones down below behind the fold. This lets you know how you have done and gives you some of the highlights, as you can see we aren't doing great.

Facebook Analytics

Facebook Analytics of NWJustice

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Similar to the Twitter analytics Facebook insights shows some basic information graphed out over time and shows how your recent posts are faring. The reach number is the number of people who actually saw the post. Facebook starts by showing new posts to a sampling of your followers and then sharing to more people if that sample interacts with the post. This serves to cut down on spam and allows Facebook to monetize post promotion. This is why you want to focus on getting a highly engaged audience rather than a large one.

How to use the data

All this data is useless if you don't use it, here are a few of the many potential applications. Use the data to figure out exactly who is interested in you and then write for them, If it turns out that your audience is mostly older veterans you will talk to them in a different way from farm workers.

Something very simple you can do is just see which platforms have the most engaged audience, if you know lots of people are following your Facebook page but all the actual talking is on Twitter you may need to either to step things up on Facebook or spend more of your time on Twitter.

Using click trackers you can see where people are looking at your site, it can let you know if you need to reposition important elements or remove distracting nonessential ones.

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